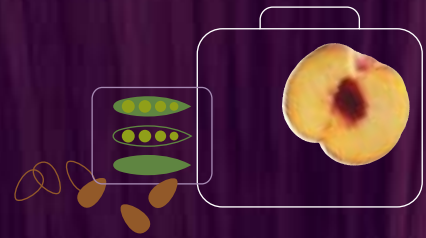


# Health Facts



## Get the Most Nutrition Out of Your Calories

Each major food group provides a variety of nutrients, so it's important to include all food groups in your daily eating plan. You will enjoy many different foods while getting essential nutrients that help you get the most nutrition out of your calories.

Many older adults don't eat enough foods that contain calcium, potassium, fiber, magnesium, and vitamins A, C, D, and E. Fruits and vegetables contain potassium, fiber, magnesium, and vitamins A and C. Vitamin E is found in many ready-to-eat cereals, nuts, and vegetable oils. Calcium and vitamin D are found in fat-free and low-fat milk. At the same time, many older adults eat too many foods high in calories, saturated and *trans* fats, cholesterol, added sugars, and salt.

Getting the nutrients you need through a healthy diet is essential for overall health. So, look for foods that are packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients, but lower in calories. These foods should be the foundation of your diet. Eating nutrient-packed foods helps you stay within your calorie needs while meeting your nutrient needs.

### What are my daily calorie needs?

There is a right number of calories for you to eat each day. Find your number in the table below. For example, a 60-year-old, sedentary woman should aim for 1,600 calories a day, while a 60-year-old, sedentary man should aim for 2,000 calories a day. You could use up the entire amount on a few high-calorie items, but chances are you won't get the full range of nutrients that your body needs.

Estimated Calories Needed by Gender, Age, and Activity Level<sup>a</sup>

Gender	Age (Years)	Sedentary <sup>b</sup>	Moderately Active <sup>c</sup>	Active <sup>d</sup>
Female	51+	1,600	1,800	2,000 - 2,200
Male	51+	2,000	2,200 - 2,400	2,400 - 2,800

<sup>a</sup> These levels are based on Estimated Energy Requirements (EER) from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Dietary Reference Intakes Macronutrients Report, 2002, calculated by gender, age, and activity level for reference-sized individuals. "Reference size," as determined by IOM, is based on median height and weight for that height to give a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 21.5 for adult females and 22.5 for adult males.

<sup>b</sup> Sedentary means a lifestyle that includes only the light physical activity associated with typical day-to-day life.

<sup>c</sup> Moderately active means a lifestyle that includes physical activity equivalent to walking about 1.5 to 3 miles per day at 3 to 4 miles per hour, in addition to the light physical activity associated with typical day-to-day life.

<sup>d</sup> Active means a lifestyle that includes physical activity equivalent to walking more than 3 miles per day at 3 to 4 miles per hour, in addition to the light physical activity associated with typical day-to-day life.

## HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

Eat a variety of nutrient-packed foods and beverages within and among the basic food groups, while limiting foods with saturated fat, *trans* fats, cholesterol, added sugars, and salt, as well as alcohol. Those who choose to consume alcoholic beverages should do so sensibly and in moderation. Individuals taking medications that interact with alcohol and those with specific medical conditions should not consume alcoholic beverages. Select a variety of foods from each food group and within food groups. A healthy eating plan is one that:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, dry beans (legumes), eggs, and nuts
- Is low in saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugar
- Balances calorie intake with calorie needs

### Use the Nutrition Facts label.

Most packaged foods have a Nutrition Facts label. Use this tool to make smart food choices and find out how much you are actually eating. To use the label effectively:

**Check servings and calories.** Find out how much you are actually eating. Look at the serving size and how many servings you are eating. If you are eating two servings, you are eating double the calories and the nutrients listed in the Nutrition Facts label for one serving of the food.

**Check the percent Daily Value (% DV).** For many nutrients, the Nutrition Facts label provides a % DV. Five percent DV or less is low and 20% DV or more is high.

- Try to get 100% DV per day of dietary fiber; vitamins A, C, and D; calcium; potassium; and iron.
- Try to stay below 100% DV per day for total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol, and below 65% DV (1,500 milligrams) for sodium.
- Try to keep *trans* fats as low as possible.

# Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)

Servings Per Container 2

## Amount Per Serving

**Calories** 250      **Calories from Fat** 110

**% Daily Value\***

**Total Fat** 12g      18%

Saturated Fat 3g      15%

*Trans* Fat 3g

**Cholesterol** 30mg      10%

**Sodium** 470mg      20%

**Potassium** 700mg      20%

**Total Carbohydrate** 31g      10%

Dietary Fiber 0g      0%

Sugars 5g

**Protein** 5g

Vitamin A      4%

Vitamin C      2%

Calcium      20%

Iron      4%

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

### Read the ingredient list.

Ingredients are listed in descending order by weight from most to least. Make sure that those ingredients you want more of, such as whole grains (e.g., whole wheat) are listed first. Make

sure that those you want to eat less of, like added sugars, are not one of the first few ingredients. Some names for added sugars (caloric sweeteners) include brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrates, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, invert corn syrup, invert sugar, lactose, maltose, malt syrup, molasses, maple syrup, raw sugar, sucrose, and syrup.

You can get a big nutritional “bang for the bite” by making smart food choices. The comparisons in the Smart Food Choices chart are just some examples of how you can get more from your calories.

As an older adult, you may have increased needs for particular nutrients and should select food sources of these nutrients more often. For example:

- Many people over 50 years old have reduced absorption of vitamin B12. Fortified cereal, lean meat, some fish or shellfish, and vitamin B12 dietary supplements are sources of vitamin B12.
- Older adults, people with dark skin, and people insufficiently exposed to sunlight tend to need more vitamin D to help maintain bone health. Drinking vitamin D-fortified low-fat or fat-free milk is a good way to get vitamin D.
- Since constipation may affect up to 20% of people over age 65, older adults should consume foods rich in dietary fiber.
- Lifestyle changes can prevent or delay the onset of high blood pressure and can lower elevated blood pressure. These changes include increasing potassium intake, reducing salt intake, eating an overall healthful diet, and getting enough physical activity.

Smart Food Choices
<b>Vitamin A</b>
1 oz cheese puffs snack = 0.6 IU (1% DV) in 122 calories vs. 1/2 c carrot, cooked = 13,420 IU (270% DV) in 27 calories
<b>Vitamin C</b>
1 12-fluid-oz soft drink = 0 mg (0% DV) in 160 calories vs. 1 c (8 fluid oz) orange juice = 110 mg (180% DV) in 120 calories
<b>Dietary Fiber</b>
1 slice white bread = 1 g (4% DV) in 80 calories vs. 1 slice whole-wheat bread = 2 g (8% DV) in 70 calories
<b>Vitamin E</b>
1 oz potato chips = 3 mg (10% DV) in 152 calories vs. 1 oz almonds = 7 mg (25% DV) in 160 calories

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service. 2004. USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 17. Nutrient Data Laboratory Home Page, [www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp).

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